

CLAIMS:

1. A method of reassigning user data in a communications system, the user data comprising a plurality of identities for each user, the method comprising the steps of:

storing in a user information store a plurality of identities in association with a first serving controller, the plurality of identities being associated with respective registration statuses selected from a registered status and an unregistered status;

detecting that a user has requested a registration to a second serving controller using at least one of said plurality of identities;

issuing a registration termination request identifying the at least one of the plurality of identities, which has been newly assigned to the second serving controller as a result of the requested registration; and

responsive to the registration termination request, i) issuing a re-registration notification to the user including the at least one of the plurality of identities which has a registered status and which was not assigned to the second serving controller as a result of the requested registration, and ii) disassociating all identities of the said user from the first serving controller.

2. A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of disassociating all identities of the said user from the first serving controller comprises removing the all identities and their data from the first serving controller, and removing their association in the user information store with the first serving controller.

3. A method according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of identities include a set of unregistered statuses, and wherein the set is disassociated but not reassigned.

4. A method according to claim 1, wherein the registration termination request includes a deregistration reason.

5. A method according to claim 4, wherein the deregistration reason in a 3GPP communication system comprises NEW_SERVER_ASSIGNED.

6. A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of detecting that the user has requested registration comprises receiving at the user information store an authentication request.

7. A method according to claim 1, wherein at least two users have a shared identity and a non-shared identity and the method further comprises a step of checking, when the non-shared identity has been newly assigned to the second serving controller, whether the user has the shared identity and, if so, issuing a re-registration notification to other users sharing the shared identity.

8. A communications system comprising:
a first serving controller;
a user information store, which holds for a user a plurality of identities in association with the first serving controller, the plurality of identities being associated

with respective registration statuses selected from a registered status and an unregistered status;

a second serving controller configured to transfer to the user information store a user authentication request identifying the user; and wherein the user information store is operable to detect the user authentication request and comprises means for inserting into a registration termination request issued to the first serving controller each identify of that user, which was newly associated to the second serving controller as a result of the user authentication request, and wherein the first serving controller is operable, responsive to the registration termination request, to i) issue a re-registration notification to the user including each identity which has a registered status and which was not assigned to the second serving controller as a result of the user authentication request, and ii) disassociate all identities of the said user from the first serving controller.

9. A communications system according to claim 8, wherein the user information store comprises a home subscriber server.

10. A communications system according to claim 8, wherein the serving controller comprises a call state control function.

11. A communications system according to claim 8, wherein the communications system is wireless.

12. A communications system according to claim 8, wherein said plurality of identities includes a shared identity which is associated with at least one other user.

13. A communications system according to claim 12, wherein the first serving controller is operable to issue a re-registration notification to the at least one other user.

14. A serving controller for use in a system for providing communication between users, the serving controller having an interface adapted to communicate with a user information store, whereby a plurality of identities, each with respective registration statuses, associate a user with the serving controller and being operable, responsive to a registration termination request received from the user information store, to i) issue a re-registration notification to the user including each identity which has a registered status and which incorrectly associates the user with the first serving controller, and ii) disassociate all identities of the said user from the serving controller.

15. A serving controller according to claim 14, which is operable to disassociate all identities of the said user by removing the identities and their data in the serving controller and by removing their association in the user information store.

16. A serving controller according to claim 14, which is operable to read a deregistration reason in the registration termination request.

17. A serving controller according to claim 14, which is operable to issue a re-registration notification to any other users sharing one of the said identities.

18. A communications system, utilizing the reassignment of user data comprising a plurality of identities for each user, the system comprising:

storing means for storing in a user information store a plurality of identities in association with a first serving controller, the plurality of identities being associated with respective registration statuses selected from a registered status and an unregistered status;

detecting means for detecting that a user has requested a registration to a second serving controller using at least one of said plurality of identities;

issuing means for issuing a registration termination request identifying the at least one of the plurality of identities, which has been newly assigned to the second serving controller as a result of the requested registration;

notification means for issuing a re-registration notification to the user including the at least one of the plurality of identities which has a registered status and which was not assigned to the second serving controller as a result of the requested registration; and

disassociating means for disassociating all identities of the said user from the first serving controller;

wherein the notification and disassociating means are responsive to the registration termination request.

19. A system according to claim 18, wherein the disassociating means comprises removing means for removing the all identities and their data from the first serving controller, and removing their association in the user information store with the first serving controller.

20. A system according to claim 18, wherein the plurality of identities include a set of unregistered statuses, and wherein the set is disassociated but not reassigned.

21. A system according to claim 18, wherein the detecting means comprises receiving means for receiving at the user information store an authentication request.

22. A system according to claim 18, wherein at least two users have a shared identity and a non-shared identity and the system further comprises checking means for checking, when the non-shared identity has been newly assigned to the second serving controller, whether the user has the shared identity and, if so, the notification means is configured to issue a re-registration notification to other users sharing the shared identity.